

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 231220
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-15 EA-12 EUR-12 IO-14
PCH-02 SIG-03 SSM-05 PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
HA-05 SAA-01 SES-02 /131 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND:
APPROVED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND
PA/PRS - MR. CARTER (INFO)
H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/IAI - MR. KORN
NEA/ARN - MR. HOWELL
NEA/EGY - MR. MARTHINSEN
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM
-----098004 130207Z /21

O 122248Z SEP 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 STATE 231220

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
SECDEF WASHDC 0000
JCS WASHDC 0000
CIA WASHDC 0000
NSC WASHDC 0000
USICA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS POUCH

UNCLAS STATE 231220

CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING - SEPT 12

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF
WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR SEPTEMBER 12,
GIVEN AT THURMONT, MARYLAND.

MR. POWELL: THE MINISTERIAL-LEVEL MEETING BETWEEN THE
EGYPTIAN AND AMERICAN DELEGATIONS THAT WAS SCHEDULED FOR
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PAGE 03 STATE 231220

YESTERDAY EVENING, I BELIEVE YOU HAVE ALREADY BEEN
INFORMED, HAS BEEN RESET FOR 2:00 P.M. TODAY. THAT WILL
TAKE PLACE IN HOLLY.

IN ADDITION, PRESIDENT SADAT AND PRESIDENT CARTER MET
TODAY AT ASPEN FROM 10:30 UNTIL ABOUT A LITTLE AFTER
12:00, ABOUT 12:05 I BELIEVE. AND FINALLY, JUST TO COVER
ALL POSSIBILITIES, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT TODAY AND
YESTERDAY AND GENERALLY SPEAKING, ALL THREE GOVERNMENTS
HAVE HAD A SERIES OF MEETINGS INVOLVING THEIR OWN
DELEGATIONS.

Q. THERE IS A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE PRESIDENT ON A BICYCLE.
DID HE RIDE THE BICYCLE OR JUST SORT OF SIT ON IT WHILE
HAVING A CONVERSATION?

A. YOU WILL NOTICE THE PHOTOGRAPH IS CROPPED SO IT IS
NOT POSSIBLE TO SEE WHETHER TRAINING WHEELS -- (LAUGHTER)
HOWEVER, I CAN CONFIRM FOR YOU THAT INDEED THIS MORNING THE
PRESIDENT DID RIDE A BYCYCLE ALONG THE PATHS OF CAMP
DAVID. AND AS HE WAS RIDING ALONG, HE HAPPENED UPON
MEMBERS OF THE EGYPTIAN DELEGATION AND HE STOPPED TO

CHAT WITH THEM, AND THAT WAS THE SETTING FOR THE PHOTOGRAPH.

Q. CAN WE CHANGE THE SUBJECT AND ASK ABOUT MEETINGS? WHY WAS THE MEETING LAST NIGHT WITH THE EGYPTIANS POSTPONED UNTIL THIS AFTERNOON?

A. I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO GO INTO GREAT DETAIL THERE BECAUSE THAT WAS AN INTERNAL MATTER PRIMARILY INVOLVING THE EGYPTIAN DELEGATION. HOWEVER, I CAN TELL YOU THE CHANGE OF TIME FOR THAT MEETING WAS NOT SIGNIFICANT WITH REGARD TO THE OVERALL PROGRESS OF THE TALKS.

GENERALLY SPEAKING, LET ME JUST REMIND YOU THAT, AS I UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 231220

INDICATED YESTERDAY, THE DISCUSSIONS BEGINNING SUNDAY EVENING ARE, AS I SAID THEN, BOTH MORE INTENSE AND MORE DETAILED THAN THEY HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST. AS A CONSEQUENCE, THE BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS TAKE LONGER AND THE PERIOD OF REVIEW IN WHICH THE DELEGATIONS OF EACH GOVERNMENT SIT DOWN AND ASSESS THE PREVIOUS BILATERAL MEETINGS ALSO TAKE LONGER. AND MY ASSUMPTION WOULD BE -- I THINK MORE THAN MY ASSUMPTION -- IS THAT IS WHAT IS INVOLVED HERE.

IT DOES NOT RELATE TO ANYTHING OTHER THAN THE STYLE AND PACE OF THE DISCUSSIONS AT THIS PARTICULAR POINT.

Q. IS THERE ANYTHING SCHEDULED WITH THE ISRAELIS?

A. THERE ARE NO MEETINGS SCHEDULED TODAY THAT I KNOW OF, BUT I WILL POST ON IT IF SOMETHING DEVELOPS.

Q. ON SUNDAY NIGHT, DID THE PRESIDENT MEET WITH BEGIN ONCE OR WAS THERE A BREAK SO THAT IT BECAME TWO MEETINGS?

A. I BELIEVE -- I AM NOT SURE IT WAS SUNDAY NIGHT, BUT I BELIEVE IT WAS. I THINK IT WAS WHEN THEY MET IN THE AFTERNOON FROM ABOUT 5:30 AND THEN THEY BROKE FOR -- AND I THINK I COVERED THIS YESTERDAY -- THEY BROKE TO EAT, FOR SUPPER, AND THEN THEY MET AGAIN, CAME BACK TOGETHER LATER IN THE EVENING, 9:30, SO FORTH, AND TALKED ON INTO THE EVENING.

Q. WE HAVE BEEN HEARING THIS IS A CRITICAL DAY IN THE SUMMIT --

A. NOT FROM ME.
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PAGE 05 STATE 231220

Q. IT IS A REFORMULATED ISRAELI PLAN AND HUSSEIN IS COMING. CAN YOU TOUCH ON ANY OF THOSE TOPICS?

A. I WILL START IN REVERSE ORDER. SO FAR AS I KNOW, AND AS FAR AS ANYONE UP THERE KNOWS, KING HUSSEIN IS NOT COMING.. OKAY? AND THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR KING HUSSEIN TO COME TO CAMP DAVID.

Q. WHY DID SADAT PHONE HIM?

A. LET ME FINISH THIS QUESTION. THE QUESTION WAS DID PRESIDENT SADAT PHONE HIM. LET ME FINISH THIS WHILE I AM THINKING ABOUT IT. IN TERMS OF PRESENTATION OF PLANS AND IDEAS AND REFORMULATION AND THEREFORE, THE ONLY THING I CAN SAY ABOUT THAT IS THERE HAVE BEEN PRESENTATIONS OF THOUGHTS AND IDEAS AND QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS AND SO FORTH VIRTUALLY FROM THE OUTSET. AND I DON'T THINK THERE IS ANY WAY PRODUCTIVELY TO TRY TO DRAW LINES THAT THIS PLAN, SOMEBODY PRESENTED A PLAN COMPREHENSIVE OR SEMI-COMPREHENSIVE WITH X AMOUNT OF CONCESSIONS AS OPPOSED TO FLEXIBILITY AND SO FORTH. THAT SIMPLY IS NOT THE NATURE OF THE DISCUSSIONS AT THIS POINT. AND I THINK THAT SORT OF ATTEMPTING TO PLACE THEM INTO THAT MODE -- I WILL SAY IT IS NOT THE NATURE NOW -- HAS NOT BEEN THE NATURE OF DISCUSSIONS LEADS YOU DOWN A NONPRODUCTIVE PATH.

I JUST DON'T SEE ANY WAY TO DRAW THOSE -- AND AS FAR AS A CRUCIAL DAY BUSINESS, IT IS SORT OF A CRUCIAL MEETING, I SUPPOSE. AND I DON'T KNOW OF A WAY TO MAKE ANY ONE DAY -- PICK ANY ONE DAY. I THINK THAT IS A VERY SUPERFICIAL AND UNSOPHISTICATED WAY TO VIEW THE PROCESS. NOW, THE OTHER QUESTION THAT I PROMISED TO ANSWER WAS ABOUT WHETHER PRESIDENT SADAT SPOKE WITH KING HUSSEIN BY TELEPHONE. HE DID SO YESTERDAY.

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PAGE 06 STATE 231220

Q. YOU SAID YESTERDAY THAT THERE WAS NO JUSTIFICATION FOR EITHER OPTIMISM OR PESSIMISM, NO PARTICULAR JUSTIFICATION.

A. I HAVE BEEN SAYING THAT FOR FOUR DAYS.

Q. THAT IS CORRECT. SURELY BY THIS TIME, ASSUMING THE

SUMMIT IS GOING TO END ABOUT THE TIMEFRAME WE ALL THOUGHT -- THURSDAY, LET'S SAY -- YOU OUGHT TO HAVE SOME IDEA OF THE WAY IT IS GOING.

A. I CANNOT DO SO. I DON'T THINK THERE IS ANY BASIS AT THIS POINT TO DO SO. AND AS FAR AS YOUR ASSUMPTION OF WHEN IT WILL END, IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO SPEAK TO THAT. I WOULD JUST REMIND YOU THAT INEVITABLY IN THIS PROCESS, ONE MEETING MAY APPEAR TO GO VERY WELL, AND UPON ANALYSIS IT MAY APPEAR THAT IT DIDN'T GO QUITE SO WELL, AND VICE VERSA. AND THAT IS WHY IT IS NOT EVEN PRODUCTIVE FOR US, MUCH LESS FOR YOU, TO INDULGE IN UNINFORMED TEMPERATURE-TAKING, IN GUESSING ABOUT, "WELL, AS OF 3:00 TODAY, WHICH WAS MY DEADLINE," OR AS OF 1:00 TODAY, WHICH WAS MY PARTICULAR DEADLINE FOR STANDING UP AND SORT OF BRIEFING YOU PEOPLE, WHAT ARE THE ODDS OF SUCCESS, HOWEVER ONE DEFINES THAT TERM.

JUST FROM WATCHING THE DISCUSSION -- AND I DON'T WANT TO GIVE YOU THE IMPRESSION THAT I HAVE SAT IN ON THE DISCUSSION AT ALL. AND FROM WATCHING THE ATTITUDE AND LISTENING TO THE REPORTS OF VARIOUS MEETINGS, AT ANY PARTICULAR POINT YOU MIGHT HAVE THIS OR THAT PERSON THINKING, WELL, THINGS LOOK A LITTLE BIT BETTER OR NOT QUITE SO GOOD OR IT APPEARS THERE IS MORE FLEXIBILITY
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 07 STATE 231220

HERE OR APPEARS THERE IS LESS. AND TAKING A CUT ACROSS IT MIGHT GIVE YOU A TOTALLY ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION OF WHAT IS GOING ON. AND THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS, AS I HAVE SAID ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, WE ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO MAKE ANY SORT OF INFORMED JUDGMENT ABOUT THE FINAL OUTCOME OF THE DISCUSSIONS. I NOTICED SOME REPORTS OF "STALEMATE." EVEN THOUGH I THOUGHT YESTERDAY I DID MY BEST TO LET YOU KNOW THAT WAS INAPPROPRIATE, WELL, THAT IS WRONG. I OBVIOUSLY CAN'T --

Q. WHAT IS WRONG?

A. WELL, BECAUSE THERE IS NOT ANY "STALEMATE," PERIOD, CLOSE QUOTE.

Q. WAS THERE AN EGYPTIAN TELEVISION PERSONALITY UP AT CAMP DAVID YESTERDAY AND WILL THERE BE OTHERS THERE ACCORDED THE SAME PRIVILEGES?

A. I HAVE DISCUSSED THAT PARTICULAR SITUATION WITH DAN PATIR, I WILL BE GLAD TO DISCUSS IT WITH YOU. I DON'T INTEND TO WASTE THE TIME OF THE BRIEFING ARGUING WITH

YOU ABOUT -- I THINK WE CAN RESOLVE THE QUESTION IN AN

AGREEABLE FASHION.

Q. MAY I FOLLOW UP? YOU SAID IT IS UNSOPHISTICATED TO TALK ABOUT CRACKING UP. ARE YOU AT THE POINT WHERE YOU ARE BEGINNING -- IS THERE GOING TO BE A FINAL DECLARATION? IS THERE GOING TO BE SOMETHING THESE PEOPLE SAY, AREN'T YOU AT THE POINT OF BEGINNING TO PUT THAT DOWN ON PAPER? AREN'T YOU AT THE POINT WHERE THE PEOPLE UP THERE KNOW ROUGHLY IN MANY AREAS WHAT THEY THINK THEY ARE GOING TO BE ABLE TO DO AND, THEREFORE, SAY ABOUT IT? AND IF THAT IS CORRECT, DOESN'T THAT MEAN YOU HAVE SOME IDEA OF HOW YOU ARE GOING TO WIND UP?

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 08 STATE 231220

A. I AM REALLY NOT TRYING EVEN TO BE EVASIVE. SOMETIMES I AM. IN THIS CASE I AM NOT BEING EVASIVE. AND THERE IS SIMPLY NOT A GOOD BASIS FOR PREDICTING OR GUESSING HOW THE CONFERENCE WILL CONCLUDE. AND, AS I SAID, YOU MAY DO SO BASED ON HOW A CERTAIN NUMBER OF PEOPLE FELT AFTER A PARTICULAR MEETING AND THEN HOW DIFFERENTLY THEY FELT AFTER SITTING DOWN AND GOING OVER THAT MEETING IN SOME DETAIL.

BUT IN TERMS OF STEPPING BACK AND TAKING AN OVERALL VIEW OF IT, ONE CAN'T DO THAT, NOR CAN ONE PREDICT WITH EXACTNESS THE DAY THE CONFERENCE WILL CONCLUDE.

Q. IS IT FAIR TO SUGGEST IT MAY GO ON A LITTLE LONGER THEN; IN OTHER WORDS, THE PROCESS MAY CONTINUE ON LONGER?

A. IT WILL CERTAINLY GO ON LONGER THAN TODAY. HOW MUCH LONGER I AM NOT SURE.

Q. IF IT IS AS UNRESOLVED AS YOU INDICATE, ARE THE CHANCES, SAY, TODAY BETTER THAN YESTERDAY THAT THEY MAY RUN ON INTO THE WEEK, INTO THE WEEKEND?

A. I JUST DON'T KNOW. OBVIOUSLY, WITH EVERY PASSING DAY, IN A SENSE, THE CHANCES OF IT LASTING LONGER ARE GREATER, BUT ONLY IN THE MOST LITERAL SENSE. I SIMPLY THINK IT IS NOT A GOOD IDEA TO BE OFFERING DAY-TO-DAY GUESSES ABOUT WHEN THE CONFERENCE WILL END.

IN THE FIRST MATTER, EXCEPT FOR OUR OWN PERSONAL PLANS, AND NOT TO BELITTLE THOSE, IT IS LARGELY IRRELEVANT. AND, SECONDLY, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, I

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 09 STATE 231220

THINK, GIVEN THE LACK OF OTHER INFORMATION, THAT IF I

ENGAGE IN THAT, THEN THAT BECOMES AN IRRELEVANT BUT
NEVERTHELESS IMPORTANT BASIS FOR SPECULATION ABOUT HOW
IT MUST BE GOING; IF IT ENDS A LITTLE BIT EARLIER OR LATER,
THEN THAT IS SUPPOSED TO MEAN SOMETHING. IT DOESN'T
SIMPLY BECAUSE WE ARE ONLY DEALING WITH MY BEST GUESS
AT THE TIME.

Q. IS DEFENSE SECRETARY BROWN HERE? AND WHO ELSE? HAS
ANYONE ELSE COME UP?

A. SECRETARY BROWN IS NOT HERE, AND I DONT KNOW OF ANYONE
ELSE THAT HAS COME UP. BUT I WILL TAKE THAT QUESTION AND
CHECK.

Q. WE ARE TIRED OF YOUR LECTURES EVERY DAY, AND
WE ALSO THINK, WHEN YOU PUT OUT A NOTICE THAT THERE IS
GOING TO BE A MEETING IN THE EVENING, YOU SHOULD
CERTAINLY LET US KNOW WHEN IT DIDNT HAPPEN.

THE WHOLE QUESTION IS YOU SAID THERE ISN'T A STALEMATE
BUT YOU GAVE US NO INDICATION OF WHY YOU DONT THINK
THERE IS.

A. WELL, I WILL IGNORE THE ASSESSMENT OF MY BRIEFINGS
AND AGREE WITH YOU THAT YOU WERE ENTITLED TO NOTICE
ABOUT THE 9:00 MEETING. I REGRET THAT YOU DIDN'T GET
IT.

AS FOR WHY THERE IS OR IS NOT A STALEMATE, I SIMPLY WILL
HAVE TO RESPOND AS BEST I CAN TO THOSE QUESTIONS. AND
I WAS ASKED YESTERDAY IF THAT WAS AN APPROPRIATE TERM.
I SAID IT WAS NOT. IT WAS USED IN ANY CASE. IT IS
STILL NOT.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 10 STATE 231220

Q. WHY DO YOU SAY IT IS NOT?

A. SIMPLY BECAUSE THERE IS NOT ONE. THE SITUATION IS AS
I DESCRIBED IT, AND I WILL BE GLAD TO GO THROUGH
THAT AS BEST I CAN. BUT THAT JUST HAPPENED TO BE THE
FACT OF THE MATTER.

Q. WHY HAS THERE NOT BEEN A THREE-WAY MEETING?

A. THERE HAS NOT BEEN A THREE-WAY MEETING BECAUSE THERE HAS BEEN NO NEED FOR ONE AT THIS PARTICULAR POINT IN THE DISCUSSIONS. THAT FACT, AS I SAID YESTERDAY, IS NOT

RELEVANT TO ATTEMPTS TO PREDICT THE ULTIMATE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE CONFERENCE. AND WHEN ONE IS APPROPRIATE, THEN I AM SURE THERE WILL BE ONE. BUT IT SIMPLY RELATES TO THE PHASING OF NEGOTIATIONS.

Q. I DONT MEAN TO BELABOR IT, BUT HAS THE WHITE HOUSE NOTIFIED ANYONE ON THE PRESIDENT'S ENGAGEMENTS THIS WEEKEND THAT INDEED HE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO COME? HAVE YOU TAKEN THAT STEP YET, EVEN PUT OUT A WARNING?

A. SO FAR AS I KNOW, WE HAVE NOT.

Q. HAS THE PRESIDENT OR EITHER OF THE OTHER TWO PRINCIPALS TALKED TO ANY OTHER HEADS OF GOVERNMENT SINCE THE SUMMIT STARTED? AND WHY DID SADAT TALK TO HUSSEIN?

A. OTHER THAN THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN PRESIDENT SADAT AND KING HUSSEIN, I KNOW OF NO OTHER CONVERSATIONS. WHY THEY TALKED I DO NOT KNOW. I AM REMINDED WE HAVE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 11 STATE 231220

ALREADY POSTED THAT THE PRESIDENT SPOKE WITH THE SHAH OF IRAN ON SUNDAY MORNING.

Q. THE AP CARRIED AN URGENT BULLETIN ABOUT AN HOUR AND A HALF OR TWO HOURS AGO THAT DESPITE "GIGANTIC EFFORTS," PRESIDENT CARTER HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN ANY MAJOR CONCESSIONS FROM PRIME MINISTER BEGIN. NOW THE NEWSPAPER OFFICES, RADIO STATIONS AND TELEVISION STATIONS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY WILL BE CARRYING THAT. WE WANT TO ASK YOU WHETHER YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON WHAT IS UNDOUBTEDLY GOING TO BE THE LEAD STORY ON PAGE ONE STORY IN NEWSPAPERS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY AND ON RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS.

A. I WILL SIMPLY SAY THERE HAS BEEN FLEXIBILITY SHOWN ON BOTH SIDES, AND I HESITATE TO COMMENT ON STORIES THAT I HAVE NOT READ.

IT IS CORRECT THAT THE PRESIDNET HAS MADE A GIGANTIC EFFORT GENERALLY. BEYOND THAT, IF I WERE AN EDITOR I WOULD BE LEARY OF MAKING THAT A FRONT PAGE STORY.

Q. WILL YOU CONFIRM WHETHER THERE HAVE IN FACT BEEN ANY ISRAELI PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD AT THIS CONFERENCE EITHER TO THE EGYPTIANS DIRECTLY OR TO THE AMERICANS FOR TRANSMISSION TO THE EGYPTIANS?

A. I DONT KNOW EXACTLY HOW ONE GOES ABOUT DEFINING WHAT

IS OLD, NEW AS COMPARED TO WHAT, PRIVATELY NEW, PUBLICLY NEW, AND SO FORTH. THERE HAVE BEEN A SERIES OF THOUGHTS AND IDEAS EXPRESSED BY ALL OF THE PARTICIPANTS. HOW NEW THEY ARE IS SOMETHING THAT I CANT ASSESS. AS I HAVE INDICATED, THERE HAS BEEN FLEXIBILITY ON BOTH SIDES.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 12 STATE 231220

Q. WHAT PAGE WILL YOU PLAY THAT STORY ON?

A. I WOULDN'T.

Q. SERIOUSLY, YOU SAID YOU WOULD BE LEERY OF RUNNING BARRY'S STORY ON THE FRONT PAGE. DO YOU WANT TO TELL US WHY?

A. BASED ON MY GENERAL ASSESSMENT AND THE REASONS FORESTATED, THAT WAS NOT INTENDED AS AN ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE EDITORIAL JUDGMENT OF AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS.

Q. I AM INTERESTED IN KNOWING WHETHER OR NOT YOU ARE STILL STICKING BY THE STATEMENT THAT YOU MADE ON SATURDAY, THAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE, APPARENTLY IN SOME AREAS, BUT SERIOUS DIFFERENCES REMAIN TO BE RESOLVED.

A. I THINK THAT IS ESSENTIALLY CORRECT.

Q. DO YOU THINK THERE HAVE BEEN ANY LEAKS?

A. IT IS HARD TO SAY, BUT I HAVE SEEN LITTLE IF ANYTHING THAT I WOULD DESCRIBE AS AN INFORMED LEAK, OR PERHAPS SOME THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN INTENTIONALLY MISINFORMED LEAKS.

Q. ON THE WAY IN HERE, I UNDERSTAND YOU SAID NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS. WITHOUT GETTING INTO THE QUESTION OF USAGE OR IDIOM IN ENGLISH OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT, WOULDN'T IT BE PROPER TO INFER FROM THAT THAT THERE ARE POSITIVE ELEMENTS THAT ARE HAPPENING RIGHT NOW?

A. LET ME PLACE THAT IMPORTANT STATEMENT IN CONTEXT.
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PAGE 13 STATE 231220

ON THE WAY IN, I UNDERSTOOD MYSELF TO BE ASKED WHAT HAVE YOU GOT, GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS? AND I SAID, "WELL, IF NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS," AND THEN I WALKED IN.

I DID NOT INTEND TO IMPLY ANYTHING EXCEPT THAT. I HAD, AS YOU NO DOUBT ALREADY KNOW BY THIS POINT, VERY LITTLE IN THE WAY OF NEWS.

Q. THEN THIS ESSENTIALLY IS STILL A NON-NEWS BRIEFING?

A. THAT WOULD BE MY ASSESSMENT OF IT, YES.

Q. CAN YOU CONFIRM THE REPORTS ABOUT THERE HAVONG BEEN PROGRESS MADE ON THE ISSUES RELATING TO THE WEST BANK WHILE THE ISSUES RELATING TO THE SINAI HAVE PROVED TO BE A STICKING POINT?

A. I DONT THINK THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO MAKE THAT SORT OF BROAD GENERALISATION ABOUT AREAS OF PROGRESS IN AREAS WHERE SUBSTANTIAL DIFFERENCES REMAIN. THERE ARE AREAS WITHIN AREAS BOTH IN THE SINAI -- GENERAL AREAS OF THE SINAI AND THE GENERAL AREA -- AND I WOULD NOT BE IN THE POSITION TO CHARACTERIZE THE OVERALL SITUATION IN THAT MANNER.

Q. DOES THE PRESIDENT INTEND TO KEEP HIS WEEKEND TRAVEL SCHEDULE?

A. I DONT KNOW HOW I CAN ANSWER THAT WITHOUT MAKING A GUESS ABOUT WHEN THE THING WILL BE OVER. I CAN SIMPLY SAY SO FAR AS I KNOW, THERE ARE NO PLANS TO ALTER THAT. IF WE GET TO THE POINT THAT THAT BECOMES AN ISSUE, WE WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT THEN, WHICH I SAID YESTERDAY.

Q. IS PRESIDENT SADAT GROWING IMPATIENT? IS THAT AN UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 14 STATE 231220

ACCURATE WAY TO LOOK AT IT?

A. I HAVE NO BETTER ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION TODAY THAN I DID YESTERDAY. IF HE IS IMPATIENT, HE HAS NOT TOLD ME SO.

Q. IS IT FAIR TO SAY THAT THE TALKS ARE STILL AT A

VERY VOLATILE POINT, WHERE THE LEAST LITTLE THING
WILL MAKE IT COLLAPSE?

A. I WOULDN'T ACCEPT THAT. I DONT THINK THAT IS TRUE.
I WOULDN'T USE THAT.

CHRISTOPHER

NOTE BY OC/T: POUCHED ALGIERS.

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To: AMMAN BEIRUT MULTIPLE
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